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FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7582
INFO RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY 0199
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY 0298
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 4203
RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 0191
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 0081
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 1690
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH 0336
RUEHJI/AMCONSUL JEDDAH 0397

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [KDEM](#) [MOPS](#) [LE](#) [SY](#) [NL](#)
SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/LEBANON: DUTCH SUPPORT ENGAGING WITH
RESPONSIBLE SYRIA

REF: STATE 193090

Classified By: AMBASSADOR ROLAND E. ARNALL FOR REASONS 1.4(B,D)

¶1. (S) SUMMARY: The Dutch will continue to press Syria to become a more responsible actor and believe the international community should hold Damascus strictly accountable for its actions. The international community, however, should also be prepared to engage positively with Syria if/when it acts responsibly. Dutch Foreign Minister made these points in discussion with Ambassador Arnall on November 30. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (S) Ambassador Arnall delivered reftel points on supporting the Lebanese government in face of Syrian-sponsored provocation to Dutch Foreign Minister Ben Bot and MFA Political Director Pieter de Gooijer on November 30. In delivering the demarche, Ambassador Arnall stressed that the international community could not ignore Syria's continuing interference in Lebanese politics, support for terrorist groups, and defiance of explicit UN Security Council requirements. He asked the Dutch to use their channels to ensure Damascus received a clear message of international solidarity on these points.

¶3. (S) In response, Bot noted that he had expressed Dutch concerns directly to Syrian Foreign Minister al-Moallem on the margins of the November EUROMED meeting in Tampere. Bot stressed that the Syrian government must not be allowed to think it can act with impunity; for example, those responsible for planning and carrying out assassinations against Lebanese figures must be held strictly accountable. The Dutch would continue to make these points publicly and in private channels. On the other hand, he said, Syria is "not going anywhere," so at some point a way must be found to make Syria "part of the solution" to the Middle East's problems.

¶4. (S) According to Bot, al-Moallem complained that U.S.-led efforts to isolate Damascus failed to recognize Syria's attempts to act responsibly. As an example, Al-Moallem cited his recent two-day visit to Baghdad to help stabilize the situation there. As it is not in Syria's interest to promote instability and violence in neighboring countries, he added, there should be room to engage with Syria on that basis. Ambassador Arnall noted that Syria must be judged on its actions, which to date did not provide grounds for optimism. Bot agreed that Syria must be held accountable for its actions, but reiterated that we should also be open to responding positively if and when Syria chose to act more

responsibly.
ARNALL